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Donne

THE HUSBAND.

AN ORIGINAL DRAMA,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY

C. E. DONNE, Esq.

AND

F. C. BURNAND, Esq.,

AUTHOR OF

"ROMANCE UNDER DIFFICULTIES," "VILLIKINS," "IN FOR A HOLYDAY,"

"ST. GEORGE," "LORD LOVEL," ETC.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]

W. METCALFE, PRINTER, GREEN STREET, CAMBRIDGE.

Dramatis Personæ.

(As originally cast for the A. D. C. Cambridge, November, 1856.)

ACT I.

SIR MILES DERBY.....	Mr. German Bourke.
MR. WILLIAM THORROLD	Mr. C. J. Algernon.
CAPTAIN SKUTLER	Mr. A. Herbert.
EVELYN BOICOURT	Mr. Humphrey Duke.
JEREMIAH CRISP (Friend of Thorrold's— originally a Professor of Thimble-rig) ..	Mr. Tom Pierce.
MAPLE (Butler to Thorrold)	Mr. R. Johnson.
SPICE (Servant to Sir Miles)	Mr. D. Blake.
SERGEANT OF POLICE	Mr. P. Heeler.
MRS THORROLD	
MARY FLOUNCE (her maid)	

Nearly Three Years are supposed to elapse between the First and Second Acts.

ACT II.

EVELYN BOICOURT	<i>Mr. Humphrey Duke.</i>	
WILLIAM THORROLD	} Escaped Convicts {	<i>Mr. C. J. Algernon.</i>
JEREMIAH CRISP		<i>Mr. Tom Pierce.</i>
JOHN MAPLE (Landlord of the "Jolly Sandboys")		<i>Mr. R. Johnson.</i>
TUMMAS (a Ploughboy)		<i>Mr. Sandwich.</i>
MRS. THORROLD		
MRS. MAPLE (née Flounce)		
SERVANTS, POLICEMEN, ETC., ETC.		

THE HUSBAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Drawing-room in THORROLD'S house, etc. Chairs, sofas, Doors, R. U. E., L. H.; folding doors, c.; small table in front, R. H.; chair, card table, L. I. E.*

FLOUNCE *discovered* arranging tea things on small table, R. H.
Revelry heard without.

Fl. Dear! dear! there's a noise. Now that 'll go on all night, and then nobody will appear at breakfast till to-morrow afternoon—sugar—except my missus—spoon—and I wonder how she stands it—butter—there, that's all right—there's not many of 'em will take tea—master calls it a bachelor's party—and he a married man, too. I wouldn't stand it, if I was missus. And then these bachelor friends bring down bachelor's friends' servants from London—just as bad as their masters—with their fine airs and London manners—so different to my dear John Maple. It's true John is small, but I like him for it—quite different to these rude, staring Oh, here's one of 'em.

(Enter Spice, c.)

Sp. Ah, Mrs. Flounce 'ow is we this hevening—his we fwesh, hor his we bored?

Fl. Quite well, Mr. Spice, thank you.

Sp. (taking snuff.) Rayther ha niceish party this hevening; hi hopes you doern't hobject to snuff.—Bad 'abit.—Fashin-nible — werry — hexpensive — hexpensive—but freshening—demmd freshening, Mrs. F.

Fl. (Aside.) Nasty puppy!

Sp. I find myself a deal better for the country hair. We rake so—in London—hit's frightful—we're hawfully bored. Derby is bored,

Fl. You mean your master?

Sp. Ya-as. *(Aside.)* Master! 'ow huncommon vulgar!
(Aloud.) By the way, I 'ave a letter for you from Boicourt—Boicourt 's 's name, I believe.

[Gives letter.]

Fl. Yes; Mr. Boicourt.

Sp. Ah, ya-as, haddressed to Mrs. Thorrold, hi perceive—demme—hif hi was Thorrold hi should be jealous. —demme.

Fl. Ah, there's no cause for that, although poor Mr. Boicourt was missus's old lover,

Sp. Ah, ya-as, hand she couldn't marry 'im.

Fl. No; her father thought master had money, and so Mr. Boicourt had to retire; but he loved her, and I much mistake if he doesn't still.

Sp. Werry possible, Mrs. F.—your missus don't seem werry wiwacious. (*Takes snuff.*)

Fl. How can she, poor thing; I wouldn't stand Mr. Thorrold's conduct so quietly; she has only his friends to meet—he never takes her anywhere—no society—and his friends—ugh!—the brutes—always getting drunk; why, it's an insult to her.

Sp. Pooh Mrs. F., drunk!—quite a country *noshing*—mere conviviality—that's hall.

Fl. Ah! she should never have married him.

Sp. So hi think. She's not to my taste hat all. No, Mrs. F., hif hi wanted a pardner for life, hi shouldn't go far from 'ere.

Fl. Indeed! Mr. Spice, have you made a choice?

Sp. 'Ave hi!—'Aven't hi—she's the nicest gal has I knows on—let who will be nicerer. Hah, Mrs. Flounce, you 're 'er!

Fl. (*Aside.*) He does talk nice, that's certain.

Sp. But for one kiss, Mrs. F.—merely one—I'd—

Fl. Keep off! do!

Sp. Just one—hallow me—

(*Is about to kiss her. Enter Maple at back. Coughs.*)

Fl. (*Aside,*) Gracious! here's John!

Sp. (*taking snuff, L. H.*) Ah, my little man.

M. (c.) Well, my giant! (*Aside.*) Had him there. (*Aloud and crossly.*) What are you a doing of, Mary?

Fl. Me—I—oh—yes—

M. That's what I call a satisfactory explanation.

Sp. Don't you see you're not *required* 'ere.

(*Bell rings.*)

M. Do you see you are—eh. It's the dining room.

Sp. Ah, no hurry (*taking snuff*); 'ave a pinch?

M. (*Aside.*) If there is a thing I detest—

Fl. Don't John; you know it always makes you sneeze.

M. Pooh! no (*takes a pinch*). I've taken snuff ever since I was a babby. (*Makes wry face.*) Here goes!

Sp. Ah, you'll soon get accustomed to it.

M. But I am acc...(*going to sneeze*); I say I am acc...

(sneezes. *They both laugh. Bell rings.*) There's the bell—artchi—why don't you—artchi—go?

Sp. I'm going—one kiss.

M. (between them). I say, come. (*Sneezes at him.*)

[*Exit, sp. c.*

M. (L.) I don't like that young man. That young man has materially destroyed my peace of mind. Mary, I'm astonished at you.

Fl. Why, I should like to know?

M. Should you? Then I'll tell you. I come in here and find that young man venturing on a piece of familiarity—a great familiarity—with the object of my affections—the object of my affections may like the proceeding—I don't.

Fl. Really, Mr. Maple, I don't see why.

M. But I do very much why; and I shall take the earliest opportunity of reading that misguided young man a short, but severe, lesson.

Fl. Then he'd get angry.

M. Let him.

Fl. And you'd fight.

M. There you're entirely mistaken;—I decidedly shouldn't.

Fl. Oh, dear John, don't quarrel on my account.

M. Dear John! she called me dear John! Oh, Mary, you know I love you; when will you change your Flounce into a Maple.

Fl. La, John, I can't say.

M. You can't say. Oh, I say, don't say can't say whatever you say. I've got some money; you've got some money—we've only got to give warning, and set up comfortably on our own account.

Fl. Well, John, if I must I must; but what missus 'll do without me I don't know. The company here is very bad.

M. Wages irregular—wittles good.

Fl. There's a set here this evening—all tipsy—

(*Song heard without.*)

As usual, there's that Mr. Crisp singing.

M. Ah, they say he's no better than he should be.

Fl. Lor, John! what should he be.

M. Why, better than he is. Things looks queer in this house, and the sooner we're off the better; Mr. Boicourt's the only gentleman as ever comes here—Missus's old flame, Mary, eh!

Fl. Yes, John. Ah, when I'm married I shall be a model.

M. A what did you say?

Fl. A model.

M. I'm sure I shan't allow anything of the sort.

Fl. Lor, I don't mean that.

M. But I do. I know what models is—I used to live with a artist myself once—it's indelicate in the extreme.

Fl. Hush! here comes missus—how ill she looks—be off John, do.

M. I will—but promise me one thing—when you are married, Mary, whatever you do, don't be a model.

[*She pushes him off*, L. I. E.]

Fl. Well, the sooner I give warning the better—I wonder what's in this letter—bother their new-fashioned, thick envelopes, one can't see even a letter through 'em—here she comes.

[*Enter MRS. THORROLD, C.*]

Mrs. Th. Ah, Flounce, you here. I shall not want anything this evening.

Fl. Very well, ma'am. Oh! here's a letter I was to give you from Mr. Boicourt, ma'am. Ahem!

Mrs. Th. (*sitting at table, R. H.*) Indeed! (*Takes letter.*) You may go, Flounce.

Fl. Yes ma'am. Mr. Boicourt quite well, ma'am?

Mrs. Th. I said that you might go.

Fl. Oh, no offence, ma'am, I hope. (*Aside.*) Something she don't want me to know—I shan't stop long. Ahem!

[*Exit*, L. H. E.]

Mrs. Th. Alone! My own sad thoughts and memories of happier days—my sole companions—what would I give to recall my youthful years, when my hopes were of a bright future, which, being come, brings but a mournful present. Oh, my father! who, by enforcing upon me a wealthy marriage, sought, as I would fain think, his daughter's happiness. I thank Heaven, you at least are spared the misery of your child. This letter from Evelyn—poor Evelyn! (*Opens letter and reads:*) “Remain, I pray you, in the drawing-room; it is of the utmost importance that I should speak with you, *alone*.” There was a time when my heart would have bounded with delight on hearing but his footstep; but now all is changed, and his presence, oft forced upon me, as if in spiteful triumph, by my husband, brings cruelly to my mind visions of a time which my now sad waking moments picture as a too, too happy dream. Love him! aye, how much! But I must use another name. What?—respect—alas!—I cannot. Call it what I may, my heart true to its first impulse rejects the cold and

formal term respect, and tells me, in its every beat, that I still love. But no, I must talk no more in this strain. The past is irretrievable!—for the present—to my husband, whate'er his conduct be to me, I owe a duty, and with Heaven's help will pay it.

(Enter EVELYN, c.)

(*Aside*) He comes! I fear—I know not what. (*Agitated—aloud*) Mr. Boicourt.

B. (*Agitated—advancing, c.*) Pardon me, Mrs. Thorrold—(*with feeling*)—Emma!

Mrs. Th. Hush, Evelyn—remember!

B. I do, indeed; would Heaven I could forget! but so remembering, I have sought this interview, not selfishly, believe me, but solely for your sake—your safety.

Mrs. Th. Be brief, I pray you. Should my husband—

B. 'Tis of him I would speak.

Mrs. Th. Of him? Recollect, Evelyn, from *no one*, least of all from *you*, ought I listen to one word of calumny against—my husband.

B. I know it. Oh, Emma, how noble is your conduct! And when I think—(*checks himself—then placing a chair, proceeds more calmly.*) Can you listen calmly to me?

Mrs. Th. I trust your honour, Evelyn.

B. And in that trust, commit to me *your own*, which to preserve I would lay down my life. Listen! For some months past I have been a close observer of your husband's actions—(*she starts*)—yet hear me calmly—I had good reasons for my conduct, and in disguise have tracked him to his haunts, gone where he has gone, and whene'er he has left I have followed him. Suspecting the character of several of his associates, and above all, one Crisp—

Mrs. Th. (*half aside*). 'Tis as I thought.

B. Over whom your husband exercises some extraordinary influence; feeling also that his rash course must end dishonourably, and in his ruin be involved your own, I found means to obtain certain papers, which in your hands may be the means of saving him, but if in others the certain proofs of guilt.

Mrs. Th. Heavens! guilt!—and these papers—

B. Are here (*giving them*). Read their contents—then judge for yourself—and if you have any power with your husband, urge him to instant flight.

Mrs. Th. Flight! (*impressively*) Evelyn, you have said either too little or too much. Anything is better than this suspense. What is his guilt?

B. He is—but I would spare you.

Mrs. Th. Tell me. I can bear the worst.

B. A forger.

Mrs. Th. (*utters a cry and sinks back in her chair*).

B. Emma, Emma! what have I done?

Mrs. Th. I am better now. Oh, my father! that it should come to this. And must he fly?

B. Immediately.. I myself, by an anonymous letter, have urged him to it.

Mrs. Th. But why this haste? If these are the only proofs—

B. Would they were—*others* are in existence—and soon will be—nay, perhaps even now are in the hands of the police. Your husband must go—and at once. But for yourself—you have an uncle living—take refuge at his house.

Mrs. Th. No, Evelyn, no; my duty calls me. I go with my husband.

[*THORROLD walks in c., but stops at door on seeing them.*]

B. Oh, Emma—what can I yet say—

Mrs. Th. No more, I pray you—my determination is taken. You have acted for the best, and from my heart I thank you—but I must not forsake my husband.

B. Emma! has Heaven no better lot for such an angel?

Mrs. Th. Hush Evelyn! Heaven which has sent me these trials will also give me strength to bear them. Leave me now for I must try to calm myself.

B. (*Appears as if about to speak, but restraining himself, raises her hand respectfully to his lips, and exit hurriedly at c. Thorrold conceals himself as he passes.*)

Th. (*at back, looking after Boicourt, then at his wife, threateningly*). Very well, very well.

Mrs. Th. (*reading papers*). Can I believe my senses!

Th. (*Aside—advancing cautiously*). What is she reading there?

Mrs. Th. He must indeed fly—and yet I dread to be the first to bid him do so, and fear to tell him that his guilt's discovered.

Th. (*Aside.*) Whom is she talking about?

Mrs. Th. And yet—it must be done—these (*indicating papers*) prove my husband's guilt beyond all doubt.

Th. (*Aside.*) Do they so—'tis high time to stop this. (*Aloud, and snatching papers from his wife's hand.*) Permit me, Madam. (*He reads.*)

Mrs. Th. (*rising, R. H.*) Oh, husband, do these indeed speak truth?

Th. Yes Madam, *they do.* (*She falls in chair, covering her face with her hands. A pause.*) I have to thank you no

doubt for getting hold of these papers, employing woman's wit, and woman's tactics. You thought to have me in your power, and hold out these as threats against your trembling husband. Oh, you are clever! and yet your cunning never thought of this (*tearing papers*). See, they are destroyed! Go woman, tell your disappointed counsellor that I am still free. (*takes stage to L. H.*)

Mrs. Th. Do not deceive yourself if other proofs exist.

Th. There are none.

Mrs. Th. William, there are!—and I, as a devoted wife—

Th. Will be silent. Come, it is my turn now—this Evelyn Boicourt he was your early love—my rival.

Mrs. Th. William!

Th. Think you I mind his calumnies—I like to hear them—they amuse me.

Mrs. Th. Husband, you are deceived,

Th. Of course. (*L. H.—Aside.*) Stay! Evelyn may be of use. (*Aloud.*) Forgive me this momentary heat; I am flushed with wine (*seats himself*)—overlook it—Evelyn is your friend, and for your sake I am bound to treat him courteously. Now listen—I have now no secrets from you—as you are well aware not even this house and its appurtenances stand between me and beggary.....unless—

Mrs. Th. If it be honourable we can bear it—

Th. Think you that Boicourt, as your friend, would help us?

Mrs. Th. I am sure he would.

Th. Just so. To be explicit, to-morrow I am a ruined man, unless I can command one thousand pounds. Think you not, that from your present friend—your former lover—you could, by using means which only lie in *woman's* power, obtain this sum?

Mrs. Th. Husband, what mean you!

Th. What! is it not clear enough—many women would ruin such a lover as Boicourt merely in trinkets.

Mrs. Th. And do you think me then so low? I see your object, and would rather pace the streets the veriest beggar than ask him even for a penny.

Th. I no longer request, but now command—my “devoted wife” (*ironically*)—

Mrs. Th. Then as your wife, and not your slave, I can not obey you.

Th. What! you defy me.

Mrs. Th. No, husband, I do not (*throwing herself on her knees*); but pray you, for your own sake, be warned in time—

fly; I will accompany you, and by that flight avoid the fate which surely must ere long be yours.

Th. Enough of this.—You have tried, for your own purposes, to impose upon me by an artful tale, and you have failed—the game is now *in my hands*—I have a friend who is not over scrupulous, and he—but no matter—leave me—
(*walks to L. H.*)

Mrs. Th. (*going up towards R. C.*) And Evelyn—

Th. (*L. H.*) No more; his turn will come—

Mrs. Th. (*R. C.*) Yet, hear me—

Th. Not one word.

Mrs. Th. I am sorry—

Th. So am I that you are here. (*Walking up, L. H.*)
Begone!

Mrs. Th. (*going towards R. I. E.*) I obey (*aside*); and am resolved. [*Exit R. I. E.*]

Th. So Madam, you know my secret. What matters it? The only proofs which could condemn me are, by the very hands which wrought them, now destroyed. She said there were others. (*Thoughtfully.*) No, no, none can now exist which I have cause to fear. Boicourt gave her these. Ha! ha! If he had delivered them to the police the removal of the husband would have been too tardy a proceeding; now, by proposing instant flight, but a few hours pass, and he would then kindly occupy my place. Ah! (*taking out a letter*) the author of this then is now no longer anonymous. This letter—my wife's entreaties—all tending to the same point,—instant flight. He shall not be disappointed. To avoid the increasing importunities of my creditors I must soon leave this country. Boicourt shall supply the means. Then if he takes my wife, I have an encumbrance less, and am well paid for its removal. This night shall settle it. Let me see—let me see. Aye, I have it—Crisp shall be the instrument for my purpose, He fears me; and well he may. Of late he has been timid—cautious—and I much doubt whether he will be willing to act in this grand scheme. But I will work his coward nature 'till I make him. I would do it alone—but, for my own safety, I must bind him yet closer to me. Here he is.

[*Enter CRISP, C. He is slightly intoxicated.*]

Cr. I have been looking for you—we've opened another bottle Ha! ha! another bottle.

Th. Jerry, you drink too much. You know the old saying, "Wine in—wit out."

Cr. I may appear—drunk; but I assure you—I'm not.

Th. Your speech betrays you.

Cr. (*Huskily.*) A cold—merely a cold.

Th. You can't stand steadily.

Cr. Boots—new boots—that's all. They feel as if the heels were in front. Ha! ha! (*laughing*) in front—(*gravely*) in front!

Th. Come—be as sober as you can for five minutes—I have that in hand, for the execution of which you will have need of all your wits.

Cr. Lor!—ha! ha! (*checks his laugh, then gravely*)—in that case I'll take a chair. [*They sit R. and L. C.*]

Th. Listen. From the few little...transactions, in which we have been together engaged, you must be aware of the exact nature of our pecuniary affairs.

Cr. Yes...d—d bad.

Th. True—for me—encumbered with a puling wife, and an establishment—kept up of necessity for appearance' sake—especially so.

Cr. (*Aside.*) What is he driving at?

Th. But for *you*, even at the low ebb my affairs are, it is still high tide.

Cr. Yes; but the tide's up to my chin, and I am stuck in the mud.

Th. Bah! what were you? A common hanger-on at fairs and race-courses.

Cr. A Professor of the noble art of 'Thimblorig.

Th. Your associates—thieves and blacklegs of the lowest cast—but now—

Cr. I wear straps, and associate with gentlemen.

Th. The consequence of which is—

Cr. If nabbed, transportation for life, instead of two months at the mill. I'm perfectly sensible of my advantages.

Th. You say "if"—a safe reservation—made more so by the almost utter impossibility of the case.

Cr. And you say "almost"—which is a reservation—unsafe for us.

Th. (*Aside.*) Wavering—and timid—I thought so. (*Aloud, as if thinking.*) And yet we have enjoyed ourselves—found victims who found us in money.

Cr. And may find us out.

Th. We have lived in luxury—'tis a hard matter for those who live as we have on the fat of the land, to come down to a crust of bread and cheese.

Cr. But the "fat" must be in the fire first.

Th. Or worse—prison fare.

Cr. Eh, what?

Th. Working all day is good for the appetite; some people might think a chain round the leg an inconvenience.

Cr. I infinitely prefer tight boots.

Th. And yet to this it must come.

Cr. To what? I say, Bill, don't go on in that manner. Is anything wrong?

Th. Anything? Everything! And unless you have the pluck for a bold stroke, it's all up with *you*.

Cr. (snarling). And you too, for the matter of that. I think I know enough to—

Th. Transport me, eh? A good idea; but do you think that I have been such a fool as to give you that power. No, no, Jerry, you've *worked* very well for me—you copy signatures very nicely; we've got on very well *together* so far, and you've had your share.

Cr. Ah, but your father-in-law's bills!

Th. Who did them; did I?

Cr. Hang it! t'was your idea—

Th. As were a good many other little—forgeries.

Cr. I say (*looking uneasily round*)—

Th. That's the word—good ideas in themselves—they wanted but one thing, to be acted upon—*you*, ha! ha! kindly did that.

Cr. Yes; I know—don't talk so loud; but before I found you—before we met.

Th. I think that's a subject you'd better not touch upon—of what *I* did before we met—*you* know *nothing*. Of the little transactions in which *you* were engaged I am perfectly aware.

Cr. (Aside.) D—n him! (*Shuffling uneasily in his seat.*

Th. Which was lucky for some one, as the police might have done something more than guess at the culprit. If my memory's right a reward was offered from Scotland Yard for the finding of a pocket-book, purse, et cetera.

Cr. I say, never mind that now. (*Aside.*) I'm in his power. (*Aloud.*) I'm under great obligations to you I'm sure—now tell me, Bill, what's up.

Th. (Aside.) Frightened! 'tis half done. (*Aloud.*) This much—you are in debt.

Cr. Damnably.

Th. Credit bad?

Cr. As it can be.

Th. There we're even. The remedy for these complaints is *money*.

Cr. Ah, it's all very well.

Th. And money we *must* have.

Cr. Must?

Th. I say *must*. A little juggling with a "*habeas*" will change a debtor's to a felon's prison.—In short, 'tis certain transportation—and then—

Cr. Yes; never mind the then—what must be done now?

Th. This is as it should be—first, you see what we must avoid to escape this fate—*certain*, if we hesitate; we must leave the country—to do which, and live afterwards, we must, by one bold stroke reap such a harvest as will serve us for some years to come.

Cr. Um—the time?

Th. Now—this evening.

Cr. The means?

Th. Dice—*your* dice.

Cr. Um—and the place?

Th. Here—this room.

Cr. Then the.....pigeon is.....

Th. Evelyn Boicourt.

Cr. But, my dear William, I really—

Th. Of course my "*friends*" will assist us with their purses.

Cr. But why Boicourt?

Th. I have my own reasons—one will do for you—he has just come in to a large fortune.

Cr. Yes, I know—but?—

Th. Why hesitate? What! you prefer the prison—the chain round the leg. Well, I wish you joy of your choice. I shall claim from the police the long-offered reward for the purse, pocketbook—

Cr. Why, Bill, you wouldn't split on a pal?

Th. No, I wouldn't; but when he becomes an obstacle to my plans, why—

Cr. (*Aside.*) Lor! what a man it is. (*Aloud.*) I'll do it, Bill.

Th. (*Aside.*) At last—the coward! (*Aloud.*) I thought so—now the dice.

Cr. The dice. (*Fumbling.*)

Th. Come, I know your trade, you have them with you.

Cr. Yes, Bill, yes; but (*hesitating*) you'll throw. Now do say, you'll throw.

Th. Bah!—what do you fear—give them me?

Cr. You promise, then—now do—

Th. Fool! do you think I'd trust so great a stake to the shaking hand of such a coward. [*Crisp gives dice.*]

Cr. (*Aside.*) I'm out of that—I don't feel comfortable.

Th. He will pay us in gold—in notes—those who cash such notes cannot well refuse a cheque at the same time; aha!—do you take—you know his signature—'tis good—eh?

Cr. Oh very amusing in the extreme. (*Aside.*) I shall have to do that business.

Th. Now whilst we play, watch, be cautious—

Cr. Should he refuse to play—

Th. Should he! I have my own reasons for thinking he will not. But *should he*, why then there is a way—(noticing *Crisp*, who looks startled). But there, leave all to me—but this one night—and then, we'll snap our fingers at the chain—ha! ha! and prison-house. Come! Come!

[*Exit*, taking off *Crisp*, c.l.t.]

(*Enter* MRS. THORROLD, R.I.E.)

Mrs. Th. Into what a complication of difficulties have a few hours plunged me. Now for the first time I comprehend my husband, and perceive he is as insensible to pity as to shame! Cruelly ill treated, insulted by him as I have been—Yet will I still try to soften even his heart by my devotion. Heaven help me! My husband meditates some wrong against poor Evelyn—He must be warned, and thus I may be the gentle means of saving my husband from an additional crime—but how? to remonstrate would but enrage him—No, I must proceed silently, and trusting in the goodness of my purpose, await in hope a favourable occasion. Let me consider—

[*Sits at table*, R.H., and takes up book.]

(*Enter* SIR MILES DERBY, flushed, and SKUTLER c.).

Der. (*Stopping in doorway—aside to SKUTLER*). Now there she is—is it a bet?

Sk. (*Aside to him*). Yes. A kiss, Done with you.

Der. (*In the same tone*). Will you take my word for it?

Sk. Of course, my dear fellow, within five minutes—time specified.

Der. Good—then vanish—A pony—

Sk. Or two—

Der. Be it so—

Sk. (*Aside*). Your word—ahem!—you shan't even have the chance. [Exit L. c.]

Der. (*Approaching*). Ah, Madam, pray do not disturb yourself, your attitude was graceful in the extreme.

Mrs. Th. (*Aside*). I fear this man—I know not why. (*aloud*) They stay long at table, Sir Miles.

Der. They do, and 'tis kind of them, positively generous to give me this opportunity of being alone with you,—(looks at watch—*aside*). Minute-and-a-half, I'm losing time—(drawing chair nearer). Mrs. Thorrold look at me—your husband loves the table better than you.

Mrs. Th. Sir—

Der. Of course you know it—(looks at watch—*aside*).

Ahem! two minutes. (*Aloud*) Madam—Amelia, if your name is Amelia, I love you!

Mrs. Th. (*Rises*). This is intoxication—or else—

Der. It is the intoxication of love (three minutes!). For one touch of those sweet lips I would peril my existence.

Mrs. Th. Leave me, Sir, this instant, or I must call for help. [*Goes towards door, R.H.*]

Der. (*Aside*). Now for it. Do not go—loveliest one—give me a pony—I mean a kiss—I love you to distraction, and I've two ponies on the event.

Mrs. Th. Insolent!—once for all—(*he attempts to take her hand—she rushes towards door—he stumbles over chair. Enter at back Boicourt, Skutler, and Crisp—Boicourt rushes forward.*)

B. Sir Miles! you forget yourself.

Mrs. Th. Oh! Evelyn—

Sir M. I may so, Sir—but I shall remember you—

Sk. And me too, if you please—you've lost.

B. If you *can* act as a gentleman you shall answer for this.—You have insulted this lady.

[*Thorrold comes forward from back.*]

Th. (c.) And I, Sir, as that lady's husband, request you not to interfere where you are not concerned.

B. Not concerned!

Th. Silence, Sir! What is this?

Mrs. Th. (R. C.) I will tell you—in this house I am defenceless, unprotected.

Th. So it seems—(*Looking at Boicourt*).

Mrs. Th. This friend of yours, at your table, in your house, has chosen to make me the subject of a bet, and has dared to address me in words such as no woman ought to hear without a blush.

D. Affairs are taking a domestic turn—we'll go—

Th. No, stay, stay, (*to Mrs. Th.*) and is that all?

Mrs. Th. All! oh, William! cruel, cruel (*bursts into tears and goes to sofa, R.H.*)

B. Mr. Thorrold—

Th. You are not yet this lady's husband. Come, come. a trifling bet—the wine. (*Aside*) They must not quarrel. (*Aloud*) Let's hear no more of this. (*Boicourt retires up c.*) Here—wine—set the card tables. [*Enter servant and set table, &c.*] Now, Sir Miles—your revenge.

[*Goes to table, L. I. E.*]

Sk. (*to Derby*). Well out of that?

Der. (*to Sk.*) It looks devilish queer—he's either a coward—or...a deuced good écarté player. [*They go up, L. H.*]

Th. (*Coming down R. C.*) Madame, a word—

Mrs. Th. (R. c.) Hear me, William. If all confidence, all love between us has vanished for ever, think at least of what is due to my sex, and do not by your cruel conduct drive me to—(*she hesitates*).

Th. To what, my dear—you forget, your threats are vain—mark me. I *will* have my friends attended to—and *these* are my friends—

Mrs. Th. *Friends!* And what am I to you?

Th. Well, that's a question I've often asked myself, without ever arriving at a satisfactory answer. As for 'friends'—friendship's a convenient term—they pay me for it.—*Well* too—and that's enough.

Mrs. Th. Pay! Yes, but how?

Th. That's entirely my business.

Mrs. Th. But they will discover—

Th. Fool! they never shall—and there is a mode of silencing even a woman's tongue—enough of this. Your pardon, Sir Miles. Now cards.

Mrs. Th. Cards! Oh, William, I entreat.

Th. Silence—Wine here. [*Goes towards L. c.*]

Mrs. Th. I, at least may retire.

Th. As you please.

Mrs. Th. (*Aside.*) But Evelyn—should he play—I must remain.

Th. (*Turning from table.*) What not gone—(*pointedly*)—then don't interrupt the players. Where's Crisp?

(*He is half asleep on a chair, R.*)

Come man—be alive—go and talk to my wife.

Der. (c. of table L. H.) Jerry looks the worse for the last bottle! Eh!

Sk. (*Table L. c.*) Now Boicourt.

Mrs. T. (*As he passes R. c.*) One word, Evelyn. Quick, or they will observe us.

Cr. Gentlemen calling you.

[*Goes up, then comes down L. c.*]

B. Yes, I know—(*to Mrs. Th.*) speak—I dare not stop.

Th. (R. of table L. H.) You must have a very interesting conversation there. You'll allow him to leave you, my dear, will you not?

Mrs. Th. Yes, William. I—(*aside*) heavens! what can I do?

Th. (*To Crisp, L. c.*) Idiot! keep your eyes open.

C. I can't, I'm so sleepy— [*sits by tea table.*]

Mrs. Th. (*Going towards L. c.*) Evelyn, be cautious.

Th. (*Between them.*) I beg your pardon, my dear, did you say anything? [*She sinks on sofa.*]

Der. Come, Thorrold—come, Boicourt—Skutler's throw.

Th. We're here.

B. What are the stakes?

Sk. A trifle. Seven's the main.

[*They commence playing.*]

Mrs. Th. Yes, there is one chance—I may save him—my pencil.

Cr. Mrs. Thorrold.—ahem!—I've got to entertain her—ha! ha!—how are you? [*Helps himself to tea.*]

Der. That's a high throw, Thorrold! Good! a nick!

Sk. I'll trouble you.

[*Crisp turns with mouth full and watches.*]

Cr. Dear me! what's she doing? she's writing something (*he leans over—she looks up suddenly—he drops the plate*). Ahem! the muffins—(*pretends to hand them*).

Mrs. T. Now for my plan. [*Rings bell—enter Maple, c.*]

M. Shall I clear away, ma'am?

Mrs. T. (R. H.) Yes—and here (*aside to him*) give this to Mr. Boicourt, and let no one see you.

[*He takes note and bows.*]

Cr. Hallo! she gave him something. Something's up—I'll tell Thorrold. [*Goes to card table.*]

Th. Now, Boicourt, you're throw.

Sk. Lucky dog—he's won everything!

Cr. (*Aside.*) Then it's quite time his luck should change.

B. Yes, I have been lucky. Now, are you ready?

Omnes. Yes—throw!

Cr. Here's luck! [*Stumbles against Boicourt upsetting dice. Thorrold changes them on the ground.*]

Der. Crisp, you're inebriated—not to say drunk!

Cr. No, I beg pardon, Boicourt, it's only my boots—tight boots.

Th. (*Who has picked them up.*) Here they are. Maple, wine here!

Mrs. Th. (*Who has witnessed the change,*) Those dice! Maple, the note now!

[*Crisp whispers Thorrold, who exclaims 'ha!' Maple approaches card-table with glasses of wine on salver.*]

Th. (*Rising.*) The fool's too sluggish—we'll quicken him. (*Puts drug in glass.*) For whom shall I fill.

[*Hands glasses.*]

[*Crisp, L. H. helps himself from salver—Maple extends his hand with letter in it behind him to Boicourt—Thorrold between them, takes it.*]

Cr. Your health, Boicourt, and luck. [*They play.*]

M. (*to Mrs. Th.*) Its all right, mum.

[*Exit with tea-tray, c.*]

Cr. Lor' he's taken all the muffins.

Mrs. T. No look—no sign from Evelyn.

Th. (*Rises.*) One minute, Derby.

Der. Be quick; I'm losing furiously.

[*They continue their play.*]

Th. (*Reads, c.*) "Beware, Evelyn, of the dice—my husband plans your ruin—beware before 'tis too late." My wife's hand—she shall pay for this.

Mrs. Th. (*Seeing him with note.*) That letter in his hands! All is lost!

[*She looks at him imploringly—he points to the letter threateningly, and reseats himself.*]

B. What peculiar sherry—Seven!

Der. (*Drinks.*) Peculiarly good though—Five hundred?

B. Too high! too high!

Sk. Pooh!—You're winning.—Double it.

Th. Hey! done with you—a thou——

B. (*Throwing dice-box in air.*) Lost!—I don't feel well.

[*Turning in chair—they play.*]

Mrs. T. Heavens! the wine was drugged!

Cr. (*Aside.*) Egad! he's overdosed the gentleman.

Der. Why, Thorrold, you're winning everything.

Th. Your turn's coming—there.

Der. Pooh! a paltry fifty.

[*They play on.*]

Cr. He's too quick. At this rate we shall amass a rapid—a colossal fortune.

B. The room's too hot—I shall play no more.

Sk. This throw.

Th. } We're waiting—a grand sweep—eleven the nick—

Der. } Throw on!

Mrs. Th. Horrible suspense! Would that I could save him.

Cr. This beats—thimblorig.—Oh! he's a great character.

B. I must stop soon. What luck you have, Thorrold.

Cr. Lor'! he's just beginning to find it out! Play away! This is delightful!

[*They play on furiously.*]

[*Enter Maple hurriedly—whispers Mrs. T., who starts.*]

Mrs. Th. Go, Maple, manage to detain them as long as possible. (*Exit MAPLE.*) Heavens! the Officers of Justice in this house! Shame upon shame! What if I should—if he forgets he is my husband, I must still remember my duty as a wife. He must escape.

[*Approaches card-table.*]

B. (*Handing money.*) That will be right—I play no more.

Th. Pooh! double.

Der. A great stake! I've lost. Come play!

Mrs. Th. William—

B. Your wife speaks.

Th. I hear, sir. Well what now? Throw! You win Boicourt.

Mrs. Th. Hear me, not for mine, but for your own sake—there is danger—

Th. Yes, if you stop here—play on.

[*They play. Boicourt watches Mrs. Th.*]

Mrs. Th. You are ruined, William.

Th. (*Throwing.*) Aha! ruined! a fortune—

B. Will you not listen?

Th. What—you shirk—of course in league.—Bah! play!

Mrs. Th. You will repent.

Th. Yes, when I lose. Be silent—a great stake.

[*They play.*]

Mrs. Th. He is mad! (*rushes to Crisp—brings him down*)—Sir.

Cr. Mum!

Mrs. Th. I know you, and your base designs—start not. This matters little, others know them; at this moment Officers of Justice, holding warrants for your arrest, are in this house—with difficulty can they be detained from entering here; nay, they may even now be ascending the stairs. Warn my husband! Fly, this moment—that door leads to the back. Oh, heavens! what disgrace is this!

Cr. (*Staggered.*) Lor'! Iwell.....Thorrold?

Der. Curse the interruptions!

Th. What now—

Cr. The police are in the house—we're gone coons—

Th. Bah! my wife told you—a shallow device—fly if you like—a fortune for us both is in my grasp. [*Plays.*]

Mrs. Th. What says he?

Cr. He won't be advised. Prudence is the better part of valour. I shall slope.

Th. (*Loudly.*) Now for a grand 'coup.'

[*As CRISP is sneaking up L.C. Thorrold throwing L.H.*]

Mrs. Th. standing R.H. at table watching intently—the folding doors C. are opened and a sergeant and two policemen appear. Crisp comes down L.H. Mrs Th. screams—the players stop. Th. turns half round.

Th. What is it!

Cr. (*Retreating behind chair L.H. extreme.*) We're nicked!

[*Sergeant comes down C, Police L.C. and R.C.*]

Der. } Police!

Sk. } [*Boicourt goes round to Mrs. Th. R.H.*]

Th. What means this intrusion?

Serg. (c) William Thorrold, in the Queen's name, I arrest you on a charge of forgery. [*Shows warrant.*]

All. Forgery!

[Picture.]

Cr. (L.H.) (*Putting his head above chair.*) I'm not wanted.

Serg. Also one Jeremiah Crisp—on the same charge.

Cr. Oh, Lor'! [*Ducks his head.*]

Serg. Arrest him.

[*A policeman removes chair and arrests Crisp.*]

Cr. Pickled!

Sk. L.H. Card Table. (*To Derby.*) He's done us.

Der. L.C. (*To Skutler.*) I never liked his king at écarté.

Th. (*Arousing himself, c.*) So at last! Gentlemen, I'm sorry our game should be disturbed. (*Sk. and Der. turn from him. Regarding them savagely.*) I'll pay you in full—you butterflies!

B. (R.H.) If I, at this moment, can in any way serve you—

Th. (*Ironically.*) What! you've not done enough, eh! Do you think I am so blind a fool as not to trace in this grand stroke the hand to which I owe so much, and whose kind services I swear in full to requite. There (*pointing to his wife*) is the stake for which you've played—think you I knew it not. 'Twas my decoy. Romantic fool! In the moment of your seeming triumph, know, that you have lost. Those proofs you—ha! ha! *kindly* gave my wife *I* have destroyed—

Cr. Delightful!

Serg. We know our business—*those*—you destroyed—*were but copies.*

Cr. That's a settler.

[*Thorrold is thunderstruck—Police remove Crisp to back, L.H.*]

Serg. Come, we must move—

Th. One moment—(*to his wife, who weeps on chair R.H. by table.*) And you knew of this! (*bitterly*) I owe you much, madam, for this night's work: trust me, it shall not pass unrequited. Unfettered by you, I should have been safe—rich—but now, detected—detected by the very dupes whose wealth has fed me!—Go, rejoice in the arms of the lover with whom you have plotted my ruin—a husband's curse go with you—

Mrs. Th. (*Rising.*) William, you judge me wrongfully.

Th. Wrongfully! what! that I was lulled into security, thinking the proofs destroyed, my failure to night, this letter, this arrest—all this was not your doing.

Mrs. Th. William!

Th. I have ill treated you, have I—'tis nothing to what I will do. But an hour ago, a new life in a new land, fresh schemes, happiness, wealth, all, all were before me; now, a

felon—(*savagely turning on her*). Bane of my life! blighter of my hopes and prospects! Curse you! curse you!

[*She lifts her hands imploringly—he strikes her to the ground—all exclaim—general movement—Boicourt slightly raises her.*

B. Fiend! monster! you have destroyed her.

Serg. (*to Derby L. and Skutler R. who have seized Thorrold, Sk. crosses to R.*) Never mind, gents. You're a nice 'un, you are—(*handcuffs Thorrold*).

Mrs. Th. (*Rising slowly. Thorrold stands to look back C. as he is being led off.*) William—all is now over between us! Heaven forgive you, as I do!

[*Faints. Evelyn kneels over her.—Tableau!*

END OF ACT I.

DISPOSITION OF CHARACTERS.

POLICE.

POLICE.

MAPLE.

THORROLD. SERGEANT.

CRISP. POLICE.

SKUTLER.

MRS. TH. BOICOURT.

DERBY.

R. H.

C.

L. H.



ACT II.

* * * Three Years are supposed to have elapsed between the Acts.—Time—WINTER.

SCENE 1.

Room in the "Jolly Sandboys." Window with curtains drawn, R. 2 E.; Door, R. H. in flat; cupboard door, L. H. in flat; with window above; curtains drawn behind it. Fire in fireplace, L. I. E.; half cupboard, L. 2 E.; ornaments on mantle-piece; high fender, rug, on which a cradle, coal-scuttle, fireirons, etc., bellows hanging up. Table C.; chairs each side; the whole room has a comfortable and cheery appearance; candles in common candlesticks on table; white tablecloth, and preparations for supper. Storm heard without; TUMMUS discovered getting things from cupboard, L. 2 E.

T. Master's supper—won't he be hungry neither when he comes in—bacon!—Oh my! what jolly critturs pigs is! And a pudden'—no, lor! it's a pie—what a jolly pie! Missus do make the jolliest pies as I ever see—and it be gooseberry—what whoppers. Ar wonder what be loike—ar'll take a lick (*taking a gooseberry 'twixt his thumb and finger*)—

[*Enter Mrs. Maple c. at back R. H.—boxes his ears.*]

Mrs. M. You naughty, good-for-nothing boy! who's to eat that pie after you've had your fingers in it, I should like to know?—put it down this minuit, sir, and bustle—for it's eight o'clock—and your master, as he's been out all day will make a fine fuss if everything aint ready for him (*going to cradle*). You pretty dear—

T. Yes, ma'am—

Mrs. M. Not you—the baby—Was its father out in the rainsywainsies then—and did ums wantums supper? a ticksy wicksy then.

T. Supper's ready mum—

Mrs. M. That's right—and I do declare there's the cart—run Tummus and let your master in. (*Rain heard*). Dear! dear! what a night it is to be sure—

M. (*Without*). Put the mare up directly Tummus. If I left anything in the cart, take it out; if I haven't, don't.

(Enter MAPLE, R.C., well wrapped up; he has his hands full of parcels, etc., etc.)

Here I am, Polly, give us a kiss—(she kisses him).

Mrs. M. Lor' John, how wet your face is!

M. Is it? well that's not unlikely—considering that that part of my person has been in a constant shower-bath for the last six miles—suppose you take some of these things—here books, and a packet of sermons for our parson—they're dry enough anyhow—

Mrs. M. Why John you've quite forgotten—

M. Eh? No I haven't—everything's here—

Mrs. M. No, I mean to ask—

M. To ask—eh?—what. Lor' of course, what a father I am to be sure. (Going to cradle).

Mrs. M. You don't deserve to be one—

M. Many people do get what they don't deserve, my dear. How is the youngster—Hallo! where's his head?

(Lifting baby up).

Mrs. M. Take care John—that's the way—

M. He's like one of my own parcels, "this side to be kept uppermost." I'm rather too moist to hold him as yet, (gives him to Mrs. M.) I might give him water on the brain. (Takes off over-coat). There now, give him to me.

Mrs. M. (Giving baby.) Take care John, don't drop him.

M. (Dandling child.) Drop him—did she say drop him, a ticksy wicksy ti do—one would hardly think he belonged to us, eh?

Mrs. M. Lor' John!

M. He's so like any other baby—

Mrs. M. Why he's the image of you—

M. Is he! What a peculiar cast of countenance I must have to be sure—p'raps he's like me when I was a baby—if so, I wonder who I was like—my father, I suppose—and I wonder who he was like, as a baby—Lor', what a curious field of enquiry.

Mrs. M. There John, give him to me, and have supper—

M. No I shall not—I'm becoming quite a master in the art of holding babies—a little dear—Lor' I want to scratch my nose—violently—there, take your child—(gives baby to Mrs. M.) Lor' what a comfort that is to be sure, (rubs his nose.)

Mrs. M. (Laughing). You're not quite perfect in baby-holding yet, John.

M. No, not in the intricacies of the art—I'll practise with a pillow—hold it in one hand, and scratch my nose

with the other. Now for supper—(*sits R. H. of table.*) Did the “Sandboys” do much business in the absence of the spirited proprietor?

Mrs. M. Nothing very great—beer in the day time—and the rain brought us in a couple of brandies and waters. Did you do all *your* business in town John?

M. Yes, and went to the Grange on my way back—

Mrs. M. See our old mistress, John—(*helping him*).

M. Yes, and—(*mouth full*) much bet—(*choking, she pats his back*) thank you—yes, and much better she’s looking,—I had to give her a heap of money, as I hadn’t time to leave it with her Lawyer in London.

Mrs. M. Money John—what for?

M. I’m sure I don’t know—spend p’raps—all I know is, that I had nigh a thousand pounds in “ready” in a pocket book for her—

Mrs. M. No!

M. Yes I had—and I didn’t feel comfortable—’cos I saw two ill-looking fellows watching me—so I fancied—at the Railway Station—I didn’t want to be robbed—and I’ve a decided objection to being murdered—

Mrs. M. Lor’ John, don’t—

M. I won’t—so I drove to the Grange, and there left it—pie please.

Mrs. M. Baby’s asleep—Poor missus! Well, its lucky he’s dead—

M. (*Dropping knife and fork*). He! who?

Mrs. M. Why—Mr. Thorrold—

M. Lor’ bless us Polly—how you startle me—I thought you meant the baby.

Mrs. M. No, the dear little dicksy wicksy—

M. Don’t Polly—don’t wake him—I know he don’t like it; he does make such an infernal row if woke sudden.—What d’you think I heard at the Grange to day—

Mrs. M. What?

M. Missus is going to be married—

Mrs. M. What! not to—

M. That’s it, you’re right—Mr. Boicourt—it isn’t settled quite, but ’twill be before to morrow.

Mrs. M. To think of this at last—

M. Yes, it should ha’ happened at first.

Mrs. M. Well, she’s drank of a bitter cup—

M. Eh? my dear, what?

Mrs. M. I say it was a bitter cup—

M. (*Mystified.*) Oh! yes—of course—ahem! beer, please—but Lor’ she’s been very lucky—ever since the time—more than two years ago—when she heard of her husband’s death—

Mrs. M. Yes, escaped from prison—

M. Yes, and died in the bush—so 'twas said—I don't understand how he got into a bush—or why he couldn't get out again without dving there—I wonder if it was a gooseberry bush—I suppose he fell into it somehow—

Mrs. M. Soon after that—her uncle died—her only relation—

M. Yes, and left her his house—a lot of money—and this house in which Missus set us up—and we've been married more than two years—

Mrs. M. It don't seem a day. [*Child cries.*]

M. Don't it. (*Looking at cradle.*) Those sorts of things ain't made in a day, Polly. Well, well—such is life, I'll have a pipe. (*Is about to fill pipe. Rain heard. Shout and knocking without.*) Hallo! Customers—(*hums*)—"it's no good a knocking, as they can't come in." What a storm! (*Rain violent.*) I hope the "Jolly Sandboys" ain't done in water colours. How jolly they will look to-morrow! (*Shout again.*)

Mrs. M. Oh, John! we ought to let them in. Think of being out such a night as this.

M. (*Lighting pipe.*) Then they ought to stay at home—it's after hours, and this is the only room with a fire. Why don't they go somewhere else. (*Sits and smokes. Knocks.*) Knock away! I shan't stir—

Mrs. M. It's very unkind. [*Knocking.*]

M. (*Smoking.*) The British father of a family overpowers the duties of the landlord—I don't stir—(*Smokes stolidly.*)

Mrs. M. It's good for trade—

M. Ahem! (*Smokes.*)

Mrs. M. And the "Pig and Whistle," our opposite house, will gain by it—

M. Ahem!—the landlord is roused within me—(*Knocking.*) They really must be very wet—mustn't they—poor fellows—(*irresolutely*)—we've closed for the night—tho'—and—

Mrs. M. And the Pig and Whistle is open at all hours.

M. Lor', so it is—(*rising*)—I'll—ahem! I'll let 'em in—(*knocking.*) I'm coming! [*Exit, R. C. at back.*]

Mrs. M. (*Listening.*) Two of 'em—dripping, of course—here they come—

M. (*Without.*) Straight up—follow me—

[*Re-enter MAPLE, R. C., holding candle; followed by THORROLD and CRISP, who are disguised and muffled.*]

Cr. (*Recognising Maple.*) Hallo! Why, it's—

Th. (*Pinching his arm.*) The landlord!

[*He speaks in an assumed tone.*]

C. Don't!

Th. (*Speaking ditto.*) So you are the landlord, eh?
(*Gruffly.*)

M. Well, there's no good telling a lie about it: I am.
(*Looking straight at him.*) Why, it's—

C. (*Getting behind Thorrold.*) Oh, Lor'!—he's twigged us!

Th. What are you staring at?—did you never see two wet travellers before?

M. (*Confusedly.*) Staring—Oh, dear, no! (*Aside.*) The two ill-looking parties I saw at the station—I must get rid of 'em.

Th. Now, landlord, we're wet, hungry, uncomfortable—consequently we want a fire—

C. Supper—

Th. And a room—private—which three things I see here ready—so vanish, landlord, mizzle!

M. (*Aside.*) Mizzle be blowed! (*Aloud.*) The fact is—ahem!—it's the only room with a fire—

Th. So much the more reason why we should stay here.

Mrs. M. (*Coming down R. H.*) Why you see, Sir, *we* were sitting here; but I daresay you won't want to stay long.
(*Maple nudges her, and coughs.*) What did you say, John?

[*Mrs. M. goes up again to cradle.*]

M. I—oh!—nothing. (*Aside.*) I'm d——d if this 'll do at all—

Cr. (*Recognising Mrs. M.*) Why, it's—

Th. (*Pinching him.*) The landlady—

Cr. (*Rubbing his arm.*) Don't!

M. (*Aside.*) I'm master here, and I won't be turned out.
(*Aloud.*) Sir—ahem!—you see it's after hours—

Th. After yours?—your what?

M. No, no!—(*pettishly*)—I don't mean that—yes, I do, —as I said before, it's after hours.

Th. And, as I said before—What's after yours—

M. (*Aside.*) Damme—he's doing it on purpose. (*Aloud*) Sir, I mean—our hours—

Th. Oh!—your yours—Landlord, you've been taking too much of your own beer.

[*Goes to table; Crisp, to fireplace.*]

[*Mrs. M. crosses to her husband.*]

Mrs. M. He means, Sir, that he don't usually open after eight, and hopes you won't stay long.

M. (*Aside.*) I wish he wouldn't stay at all.

Th. Very well—then the sooner you leave us the better.

[*Sits at table, R. H.*]

M. (*To Mrs. M.*) He's begun on my favourite pie—take it away—

Mrs. M. Don't be absurd, John.

Th. Are you going?

M. Yes, yes. (*Aside.*) It's not all right—I'll tell Mary. (*Whispers loud.*) I say—it's the same as I saw at the station—

Mrs. M. (*Not distinctly hearing.*) Samson who?

M. No! no! (*Whispers ditto.*) Same—saw—station.

Mrs. M. See saw—what? Oh! I can't understand what you say: come along, do.

[*Maple makes a gesture of despair, and exit after*

Mrs. Maple, R. c. at back.

Th. (*Rising cautiously.*) Soh! gone at last. (*Goes gently to door at back—reconnoitres—and locks it.*) That's safe. (*Going to cupboard, L. c. at back.*) What's this? (*Tries door.*) Fastened—good. (*Surveys room, then comes down.*) Now, Jerry! (*Slaps Crisp on the back.*)

Cr. (*Coughing*) Don't! there's something gone the wrong way.

Th. (*Sitting R. H. of table.*) We shall both go the wrong way, if you don't keep your cursed discoveries to yourself.

Cr. But you saw it was—your butler and wife's ladies' maid—

Th. True. (*Divesting himself of disguise.*) But that is no reason why you should let them know who *we* are—and we haven't escaped from prison—braved even starvation itself in the bush, and got back to England to be nabbed at last through your infernal stupidity—

Cr. (*Mildly.*) No, I hope not—Bill—I hope not—

Th. (*Playing with knife.*) I could proceed alone—

Cr. (*Aside.*) I wish he'd put down that knife.

Th. (*Eyeing him.*) No one would miss such a cowardly dog as you are—(*laughs*)—ha! ha!

Cr. No, no of course not—ha! ha!—very good (*aside*) one might as well joke with the hangman. (*Knock heard.*) Hallo! Bill, what's that?

Th. What's what!

Cr. At the door, Bill—

Th. (*Goes to R. c. door—watches key-hole—listens—then comes down and reseats himself R. H. of table.*) All quiet! pooh! Your coward fancy! Now listen! Jerry. (*Speaks low.*)

Th. You know we are near the “Grange,” where my wife lives.

Cr. Yes, “from information we received,” as our friends in blue observe—well—(*composing himself to listen—child cries.*) Good gracious! what's that!

Th. (*Rising.*) Curse on the interruption—a child's cry—(*looks about.*) (*Knock heard—louder—they listen—resume*

disguises—voice of Maple, “Let me in.”) Now, what the devil does he want? (*Takes pistol from bosom—examines and replaces it—walks cautiously to door—unlocks it. Crisp ducks behind table—Maple slowly puts in his head.*) Oh! 'tis you, is it? (*aside*) meddling fool! (*Crisp reseats himself.*)

M. Yes, it is I.

Th. What do you want?

M. (*Gradually entering.*) I beg your pardon, but would you kindly oblige me with my baby—

Th. Oh! it's yours, is it? (*going to cradle and taking baby up.*)

M. Well, I believe so—I say, don't hold the heir presumptive of the “Jolly Sandboys” in that absurd manner! (*takes baby.*)

Th. Now be off! (*reseating himself.*)

M. Yes—you've nearly done, eh? (*Aside.*) I wonder why he locked the door. Something wrong—I'll look after 'em. (*Aloud and going.*) Rain over—ahem!

[*Exit, Maple, R. c. at back.*]

[*THORROLD relocks the door. CRISP lights pipe.*]

Th. Jerry—(*reseating himself R. H. of table.*)

Cr. Bill to you—

Th. You know we are near the “Grange.”

Cr. Yes, you said that before—

Th. (*Making a gesture of impatience.*) Well, the landlord of this Inn. (*Maple appears at window above cupboard, L. c. at back.*)

Cr. Your old butler—Maple—

M. (*Aside.*) I fancy I heard my name.

Th. Coming back from town to-day, brought in a pocket book about his person no less than a thousand pounds which he was carrying to the Grange; and this, as a great secret, we overheard him telling his friend the Guard, at the Railway Station—ha! ha! the fool!

M. (*Aside.*) They're talking of me.

Cr. Ha! ha! the idiot—

M. (*Aside.*) I thought so—thank you!

Th. Well—we traced him as far as the Grange, where he stopped, doubtless to leave the pocket-book.

Cr. (*Intently listening.*) Well!

Th. Well—as highway robbery is out of fashion—

M. (*Aside.*) Lor!

Cr. And dangerous—Bill—very dangerous.

Th. Yes—I have a little plan for this evening, by which we can put this nice sum of money into our own pockets

without incurring any danger, or even running the risk of discovery.

M. (*Aside.*) I wish this chair was steadier.

Cr. Without danger—no risk—egad! 'tis just the thing I like—

Th. But should it fail—

Cr. Oh! ahem! it *can* fail—

Th. It *may*—I say, *should* it—since we must have the money—

Cr. Of course—nobble the swag—

M. (*Mystified.*) What's that about cobbler's wax?

Th. We can obtain it equally well by entering the house through the window, as by going in at the door—

M. (*Aside, with a start.*) Housebreakers—Oh! (*leans forward to listen—slips and disappears.*)

Cr. Lor' (*jumping up.*) What the deuce was that?

Th. Suspicious! (*cautious business*) all right, man—where's your courage?

Cr. I'm afraid, Bill, my nerves are not equal to our little recreation to-night—

Th. Bah! take some of this—(*offering flask*) there's no danger—

Cr. No, Bill; but don't you think you might prevail on your wife to hand over the ochre quietly, without making any little unpleasantness in the family—

Th. Bah! look you here—she dare not prosecute the Husband—*her* husband—I know her—

Cr. Dare not—

Th. Will not—equally the same in this case—report says that she is to be married.

M. (*Appearing again.*) What's he saying now?

Cr. Married! but—but you—you're a slight obstacle to that—

Th. No, no! she believes me dead—

Cr. Aha! she saw the report—

Th. Exactly so—and now she marries her old lover—

Cr. What, Boicourt—our dear friend—ha! ha! Lor', how pleased she'll be to see you, Bill! (*chuckling.*)

M. (*Aside.*) What's he saying about a bill?

Th. Yes, I shall pay her a visit—ha! ha! (*sarcastically*) I should be sorry for my presence to prove a bar to their intended happiness—so I wouldn't mind taking a smaller sum to keep out of the way—

Cr. But suppose she should plan another little arrest—it would answer the same purpose—

Th. What! make the fact of my existence public—bah! that's a likely matter.

M. (*Aside.*) I'm d—d if I can hear a word.

Cr. Then I suppose you'll agree upon a mutual separation—on amicable terms—

Th. Exactly. So I drink to her speedy marriage—She'll be surprised to see me turned up again, Jerry?

M. (*Aside.*) Turned up Jerry! what d—d stuff.

Cr. Yes, Bill, yes—Lor, Bill, you're a wonderful creature.

(*Clock strikes nine.*)

Th. Ha! we must be off—to the Grange—

M. (*Aside.*) The Grange!

Th. (*Taking out pistol—to himself.*) It may be necessary—

M. (*Aside.*) 'Ecod! it's a pistol!

Th. Are you ready—(*goes to R. C. door, and unlocks it.*)

Cr. Yes, Bill.

M. (*Stretching over to look.*) What is he doing! I wish there was a constable.

Th. (*Calling.*) Landlord! landlord! where is the fellow?
[*Maple disappears.*]

Cr. Now, landlord!

(*Enter MAPLE, R. C.*)

Th. What's to pay!

M. To pay—eh!

Th. Yes—come quick—

M. Why—(*Aside.*) I'll give it, em. (*Aloud.*) Two suppers—twenty four—beer—four pence—twenty eight pence—two and eight pence—yes—ahem! three shillings.

Th. There—(*giving money, Maple tries it.*) Hollo! isn't it good—

M. Oh, very good—its only a habit I've got. (*Aside.*) D—d rogues.

Th. Well, come on. (*Goes to door, R. C.*)

Cr. (*Beckons Maple.*) Ahem! I say—

M. (*Intently listening.*) Well, what—

Th. (*At door.*) Come!

Cr. (*With hesitation.*) Nothing! (*Exit, following Thorrold*
—*Maple stands still for a short time, then follows.*)

(*Enter MRS. MAPLE—same door.*)

Mrs. M. At last they've gone—I've just put baby to bed, and now—

(*Re-enter MAPLE, R. C.*)

M. (*Hurriedly.*) Get my hat, Mary—Oh! Lor'—here's a go—there'll be perjury committed, at the very least—

Mrs. M. Why, John?

M. Where's my stick—to think—rob the Grange, Oh!

Mrs. M. Who? you?

M. Pooh! no—the unpleasant looking parties who've just gone—to think they should have come here—Oh! Lor'.

Mrs. M. Then why didn't you seize him, and knock him down—

M. Him! they were two of 'em—I couldn't seize 'em—and if I had, I'm d—d if I could have knocked 'em down—

Mrs. M. Why not call for help?

M. Help! they had pistols, blunderbusses.

Mrs. M. I didn't see them.

M. No, but I did though—I must be off—Tummus!

Tummus. (*Appearing, R. C.*) 'Ees! Master!

M. Light the lantern—take a good stick—put on your hat—I know a short cut by the fields to the Grange—

Mrs. M. Break the matter to Mistress carefully, John.

M. Trust me—I'll tell her everything—

Mrs. M. But not all at once—

M. Oh! by instalments of horrors—like the “Weekly Miscellany”—

Mrs. M. No, no, begin about the weather—says it was a fine day—

M. What's that got to do with it—no one in his senses would walk two miles across the fields at ten o'clock at night, merely to tell a friend that it had been a fine day—pooh!

Mrs. M. Well, well, be cautious—

M. Leave it to me—I'll be cautious—baby in bed?

Mrs. M. And asleep—

M. Then, in that case, good night for the present. (*Calling.*) Turn the dog loose, Tummus—I think I said good night—yes—(*kisses her.*) Now I'm off—(*going, returns, and solemnly says,*) Mary—I'm a garden angial! (*Abruptly*) Good night!

[*Exit Maple, R. C.*]

SCENE II.

Drawing-room at “the Grange.” Window, C. at back, opening on to the garden; fire in fire-place, R. I. E., by which table with lamp and hand-bell, and desk, R. H.; chairs. Doors, R. U. E., and L. H.

MRS. THORROLD discovered seated at table, R. H., reading.
Clock strikes.

Mrs. Th. How the time has passed whilst I have been reading this romance—a sorrowful tale—and yet, 'tis no wonder that the hours should imperceptibly glide on while reading the sorrows in a life of fiction, when all the cares

and trials of my own past life seem to me now but as a sad tale that I had at some time read—life, truly, is a sad reality, surpassing even one's dream.

[*Enter Servant, L. H.*]

Servant. Mr. Maple, ma'am, of the "Sandboys," left this packet for you on his way home.

Mrs. Th. Thank you. You may close the shutters for the night. A large sum—where is my key?—(*Examines pocket-book, then, in abstraction places it on table.*)

Servant. It is stormy, ma'am, Mr. Maple was wet through—(*closes shutters—he fumbles at the fastening.*)

Mrs. Th. What is the matter, John?

Servant. Why—I beg your pardon, ma'am—but—but—I quite forgot to tell Mr. Screwer to come and mend this bolt.

Mrs. Th. That was forgetful—we shall suffer more from the winter wind, than from thieves. Has—has not Mr. Boicourt been here?

Servant. No, ma'am, his man told me, as he told him, that Mr. Boicourt had not yet come home—he has been away some time, ma'am—

Mrs. Th. I know it—I expect him this evening—what is the time?

Servant. About nine, ma'am—

Mrs. Th. So late!—well—well—(*to servant*) there is nothing more—

[*Exit servant, L. H.*]

Mrs. Th. Yes, to-night I expect Evelyn. To give him that answer which, with my own free will, he would years ago have received from my lips—to say that I will be his wife—Oh! how brightly does my future now stand out from the dark background of the miserable past! Ill-fated husband! with what feelings did I two years ago read the brief but certain record of thy death! What a fearful end was thine! His body, attenuated by starvation, found miles from the place whence he had escaped, was consigned to a prison grave, unwept, uncared for by all—save one. While even with my tears mingled the joyful recollection, that I was once more free. Still Evelyn comes not—he cannot doubt my answer! No, that is impossible; and yet—I feel a dim foreboding of evil—but I am agitated—I will read.

[*Music—the window at back is gradually opened, and Thorrold cautiously enters.*]

Mrs. Th. (*Looking up from book.*) Ah! I fancied I heard some one—O! no, 'twas my fancy—yes, a step—'tis Evelyn—(*Turns suddenly, and sees Thorrold, who comes down, c.—she starts—then faintly,*) Who are you?

Th. You didn't expect me (*removes disguise*)

Mrs. Th. That voice—great heaven!—my husband!

[*Falls stupified into chair, R. c.*

Th. You're right. Come! you needn't waste time in displaying your joy at this happy meeting—my time is precious—so to business—but—first—I was forgetting my politeness—let me congratulate you on your approaching marriage—(*Mrs. Thorrold now gradually recovering from her stupor.*) You don't seem so happy as I should have expected.

Mrs. Th. (*Vacantly*). Is it a dream! (*looking round—then, as she encounters Thorrold's gaze, turns away, shuddering.*) Alive! alive!

Th. Of course, I am not dead—I can't say you seem particularly pleased at the fact though.

Mrs. Th. But the newspaper—

Th. Doesn't always record the truth—I certainly have appeared at an inconvenient moment.

Mrs. Th. But, thank heaven, in time to save me from the commission of a great crime—

Th. What! the repetition of the marriage ceremony—pooh! you may still be Boicourt's wife—the thing's simple enough—once wedded to the man of your choice—who need be aware of my existence? To Evelyn—to the world you can speak of me as your “late” husband—in your own heart, you can think of me as—the convict.

Mrs. Th. What mean you?

Th. What! oh! you don't understand!—longer stay in this cursed country might be dangerous—therefore I *must* leave, and when once I have quitted this land, t'will be for ever; no interruption to your matrimonial happiness need be feared from me—my part will be one of silence, *yours*—to pay for it. And, since payment hereafter may be inconvenient, and might lead to unpleasant disclosures, the money you now have by you I will take, and thus free you for ever from my presence—say, is it a bargain?

Mrs. M. Oh! William, how can you urge me to, or even propose, such wickedness. If you must leave this country, I will accompany you—and for which I have always longed, will be a kind, true wife, with all my heart and soul—

Th. (*Aside.*) Romantic fool!—(*aloud*)—No I must go alone—our ways lie separate—as for Boicourt—

Mrs. Th. Aye! How shall I answer him this evening?

Th. I care not—answer me now—you have heard the terms.

Maple. (*Without*). I'll find your missus—a light there.

Th. Ha! Some one approaches—(*seizes her wrist*)—I *must* have money—quick! give it me!

[*Mrs. Thorrold rushes to pocket-book on table.*

Ha! a pocket-book—'tis the one I sought—fool that I have been to waste my time!

Mrs. Th. (R.) William, I pray you—

Th. Give it me, I say—nay then—(*struggle.*)

Maple. (*without, L.H.*) May I come in? (*pause.*)

Mrs. Th. Fly, or you are lost—

(*The handle of the door is moved, L.H.*)

Th. Damnation!—(*Music—dashes down lamp—stage dark—then makes for window.*) It shall yet be mine! (*Music—exit through window, c.; Mrs. Thorrold, overpowered, sinks on chair by table, R.H. Enter Maple cautiously, L.H.*)

M. Ma'am, I beg pardon. (*Aside.*) What a smell of lamp oil! (*Aloud.*) I say, ma'am, I beg pardon, but—

Mrs. Th. (*faintly.*) Ah! Who is that?

M. It's I, ma'am, Maple, I want to speak to you, ma'am—I thought you were alone—

Mrs. Th. (*hurriedly.*) So I was—I mean. (*Aside.*) I cannot speak with him now. (*Aloud.*) I have—by accident—overturned the lamp—

M. (*Aside.*) I thought so—(*sniffs. Aloud.*) I'll call to John for candles. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Mrs. Th. My heart will break—I must try in solitude to compose myself—but—ah! When Evelyn arrives—Heaven support me!

[*Exit into room, R.I.E.—Re-enter MAPLE, L.H.*]

M. The lights are coming, ma'am. (*Aside.*) Now my wife told me to break it to her gently—I'll begin. (*Aloud.*) Ahem! fine day, ma'am—I mean—that is—the fact is (*Aside.*) I shant't get on very fast at this rate. (*Aloud.*) You see ma'am—I came up here to tell you that two very ugly fellows—are—you see—(*Aside.*) Why don't she say something—she's asleep. (*Loud, walking slowly to L.C.*) As I was saying, ma'am—or as I was going to say—

[*Enter servant with candles, L.H.—the light shows Maple's coat covered with mud, and hat smashed.*]

Hollo! why she isn't here—

Servant. Well, Mr. Maple, who were you a talking to?

M. Who? I? Oh! ahem! nobody.

Servant. What was that for?

M. Why, 'cos there was nobody to talk to.

Servant. (*Looking at him.*) Ha! ha! ha!

M. What are you laughing at, stupid?

Servant. Ha! ha! ha! you do look so dirty, and ha! ha! ha! so foolish like—(*laughs.*)

M. Just keep your remarks to yourself, young man—I suppose I may look dirty, if I like—and as to foolish, you'd

have looked foolish if you'd had fallen head-foremost into a ditch four feet deep in green mud...

Servant. Well, I beg your parding, Mr. Maple.

Maple. I'm satisfied—but now, young man, where's your missus?

Servant. She isn't here—

Maple. Thank you—I'm aware of the fact—she was a moment ago—I want to speak to her—

Servant. Do you? Then you'll have to wait; for I don't expect she'll show herself 'till Mr. Boicourt comes—

Maple. Eh? Mr. Boicourt. (*Aside.*) An idea!—Lor' what a wonderful man I am, of course—I'll wait and tell him. (*Aloud.*) I'll step down stairs, young man, and wait till he comes—

Servant. (*Going to L. I. E.*) Very well—

Maple. (*Considering.*) No, I won't—

Servant. (*Opening door, L. I. E.*) This way. There's such a jolly supper in the kitchen!

Maple. Ahem! yes I will.

[*Exeunt. L. I. E.*]

[*Enter MRS. THORROLD, R. I. E.*]

Mrs. Th. I am bewildered. My husband returned unchanged; and Evelyn comes to night—nay, should be here now—so soon—I *must* see him, and yet I cannot, my tears would drown my words; to-morrow I will meet him, and tell him frankly all; I shall be more composed then, but now—yes, yes, it shall be so, I will struggle with myself no longer, but will deny admittance to him—(*places her hand on bell, on table, R. H., Boicourt enters, L. H.*)

Boic. Emma, 'tis late—Good heavens, are you unwell? You look pale and agitated—

Mrs. Th. O! Evelyn, you little thought—(*bursts into tears.*)

Boic. (c.) Speak! what can you mean?

Mrs. Th. To-morrow, I—

Boic. Now, now. To-night was to have been the crowning point of our happiness, of mine—and I had hoped of yours—but as it is, I know not what to think—I dare not think—relieve me from this suspense.

Mrs. Th. I will explain, if—

Boic. Explain! and is there need of explanation? Am I really to understand, that I have ceased to be what I was once to you? Are all my fond hopes destroyed? How have I forfeited your affection? (*with increased vehemence*) What obstacle has stepped in to rob me of the only thing I prize and love? Tell me of it, that I may destroy it quickly. To know the worst, is better than these horrid doubts.

Mrs. Th. (*Looks at Evelyn, as if to speak.*)

Boic. Still not one word! O am I a discarded lover on the very night I thought to claim you as mine for ever!

Mrs. Th. Spare me—(*greatly agitated*)—I never can be yours! [*Exit R. I. E.*]

Boic. (*R. c.*) Emma! (*stands stupified.*) So falls the fabric of my hopes. An hour ago, my heart beat high with joyful expectation, and years of love are crushed by one short interview; and she, who alone can allay my impatience is gone, leaving me without one word of consolation—without a single clue by which to unravel this mysterious estrangement— [*Sits at table, R. H.*]

(*Enter Maple, L.I.E.*)

M. Ahem! Mr. Boicourt—

B. Yes. Ah! Maple, what now? (*half aside*)—strange, very strange.

M. Exactly so, Sir, that's just what I say myself, Sir, so odd; but you see, Sir, I thought you was the best person to come to; my wife has such an opinion of you, Sir.

B. (*Half aside.*) She cannot have changed so soon.

M. Oh! no, she's much the same as ever; but a baby does make some difference.

B. A baby! whose?

M. Why, hers, to be sure, my wife's.

B. (*Meditating.*) Oh! that's all.

M. Yes, at present. But, Lor', she's a wonderful woman! which reminds me—(*looks cautiously round, then whispers Boicourt.*) Robbers—mum—here!

B. (*Starting.*) Em—Mrs. Thorrold in danger.

M. Rather, hush! (*Whispers.*)

B. This is serious, Where heard you this?

M. In my own house. They are to break into the Grange to-night. I overheard the plot, and am come—

B. In time to counteract it: you have judged well in revealing it to me. I never felt in a better humour for action. This excitement comes very opportunely, and will be the saving of me.

M. Will be the saving of her.

B. And for Mrs. Thorrold's protection—Oh! Maple, you have turned the current of my thoughts into the right channel. I am happy at the thought—

M. Of the house being attacked.

B. No! of saving Mrs. Thorrold. Come, we will make all secure. [*Exit Boicourt, L.H.*]

M. I hope there won't be any fighting over it.

B. (*Without.*) The light—quick.

M. Coming—(*fetches light.*) Lor'! What a garden angel I am to be sure. [*Exit, L. H.*]

[*Music—stage dark—enter cautiously at window. (c.) Thorrold, with dark lantern.*]

Th. Fortune favours me thus far—they evidently didn't expect a second visit—

Cr. (*Appearing at window.*) Is all right?

Th. Yes. The window has not been secured—come in—

Cr. Thank you—I think I'll keep watch outside—

Th. Come in, I say—(*Enter Crisp.*) What do you fear?

Cr. (L. c.) Me—I—Oh! nothing—what are you looking for?

(THORROLD is searching the room.)

Th. (R. H.) A pocket book—the pocket book—

Cr. I say, be quick—

Th. Still afraid!

Cr. Oh! no—only of catching cold—the window's open—

Th. This search is idle—of course she has it with her—here (*slaps Crisp on the back.*)

Cr. I'm not the man—Oh! Bill, how you startle one—

Th. I am going to my wife's room—keep guard here—

Cr. If any one comes—

Th. Give the alarm and bolt—

Cr. Suppose they won't let me—

Th. Take this (*gives pistol*) and, if necessary, use it.

Cr. Must I? (*Exit Thorrold, R.I.E.*) I say, Bill—he's gone—and the light—Oh! this horrid thing—(*pockets pistol.*) Suppose it should go off—I wish I could—a noise—

(BOICOURT enters at window, with MAPLE.)

B. Our lantern is out—

Cr. (*Aside.*) Oh! Lor! thank goodness—

B. The window opened.

[*Boicourt stands, in a listening attitude, at window. Maple comes down cautiously, L.C.; Crisp is trying to go up, L.C.—they meet.*]

M. Here's somebody—

Cr. I'm off—(*He tries to pass, Maple seizes him—a scream heard in room, R.I.E.; Thorrold rushes out in disorder, holding pocket-book. Boicourt seizes him.*)

M. (*Calling.*) Help! lights—

B. Lights!

B. Villain! you shall not escape me—

Th. Unhand me! I'm desperate!

[*They struggle—Maple falls—Crisp kneels on him. Lights are seen in garden, cries of "this way," heard without.*]

Th. (c.) (*Struggling.*) Damnation—I'm choking. Fire, Jerry, fire!

Cr. (L.H.) Shall I!

Th. Quick!

[*Crisp* looses one hand from *Maple*, who gives him a wrench as the pistol is fired. *Thorrold* falls. *Crisp* staggers and is overpowered by *Maple* and *Tummus*, who rushes in, L.I.E.—Enter servants, R.H. Enter *Mrs. Thorrold*, R.U.E. Lights up.

Mrs. Th. (R.I.E.) What has happened! Horror! My husband!

Boic. (R.C.) *Thorrold*! impossible!

Th. (c.) The game's up! (*to Boicourt*) so we have met again—a second time you triumph. Oh! for one hour of revenge. 'Tis too late! too late!—my hours are numbered—(*pointing to his wife*) tears—ha! ha!—weep—aye, weep, for a husband who traces all his miseries through life to you, and now, at last, his death—my sight is failing me! Her image haunts me; she hovers o'er me! like a hideous spectre! Take her away! hence!

(*Mrs. Thorrold approaches him—he repulses her.*)

Mrs. Th. William!

Th. Her voice! (*partially raises him.*) Cur—se y—(*dies.*)

B. (*lifting Thorrold's hand.*) He is dead!

[*Music, Boicourt c., and Mrs. Thorrold R.C. kneel over the body.*

Curtain.

DISPOSITION OF CHARACTERS.

MRS. THORROLD. BOICOURT.

THORROLD.

SERVANTS.

MAPLE.

CRISP.

TUMMUS.

R. H.

C.

L. H.





